

Editorial

THE growth of inflation is reflected in the size of this volume. The previous volume (V, 1974) was larger than its predecessors, but this was solely because of the large number of grants earned by specific papers which it happened to contain. In the present volume only four papers qualify for grants, and we can afford to print correspondingly less. Members should note that over 21 per cent of their subscription for 1974 was consumed in just packing and posting their volume to them, and this year postage rates have been increased.

It would, of course, be a bad situation if learned journals were driven to publish mainly grant-bearing papers (which at present are excavation reports for the most part) and thus to neglect other important works of scholarship not fortunate enough to qualify for support. This situation has not yet arrived, and one of the ways of preventing it doing so is to press for an increase in the C.B.A.'s annual grant for publication. This allocation was raised in 1972 from £1,600 to £2,000 and cannot be considered adequate for its purpose today. A grant of £100 (which is as much as it is wise for an editor to anticipate from this source) is chicken-feed when the cost of the one paper submitted—out of the several which may be available and qualified for submission—is likely to be £500–£600 if not more.

Owing to the illness of Mr. D. R. Wilson during the summer of 1974, 'Roman Britain in 1973' had to be hastily prepared by Mr. R. Goodburn and the Editor, using material accumulated by Mr. Wilson. It came as a shock to discover how few excavators of Romano-British sites spontaneously trouble to send information or drawings, despite the request published each year (this volume, p. viii), and the situation was aggravated by the delayed publication of the Department of the Environment's *Archaeological Excavations 1973*, which was not, therefore, available for use. No doubt there are many demands for excavation-summaries (by DOE, CBA Groups and various local newsletters), but the value of the annual report in *Britannia* to all those seriously interested in the subject is so great that it should be worth the trouble of despatching a contribution without waiting for individual invitations. In most cases the same summary will suffice as is sent to other bodies and, in these days of high postage rates, money saved on unnecessary letters is money gained for publication. The almost inevitable delay of half a decade or more between excavations and the appearance of a final report ensures the value of an immediate summary. One of the virtues of 'Roman Britain in 19xx' lies in its completeness of coverage; we trust that our colleagues will co-operate in maintaining its standard, and in urging others to help in doing so.

In this volume the Society honours one of its most distinguished members with the publication both of a recent portrait photograph (frontispiece) for which we thank Professor Rosemary Cramp, and of a full bibliography of his written works (pp. xi–xxviii) which has been compiled under the care of Professor J. J. Wilkes. Eric Birley celebrates his seventieth birthday on 12 January 1976. He has been associated with excavation and study in the frontier region of Britain for nearly half a century. As teacher in Armstrong College, now the University of Newcastle upon Tyne from 1931, and later in the University of Durham (of which he is now Professor Emeritus after retirement from a chair in Romano-British History and Archaeology in 1971) he has introduced generations of students not only to Hadrian's Wall, which has always remained central to his interests, but also to the study of the Roman army and the imperial frontiers. His first published work appeared in our *Journal* forty-seven years ago, and since then the flow of publication has been uninterrupted except during six years' absence on war service: but even war service was exploited to yield insight into the workings of ancient military organization. In 1949 he organized the first international congress of Roman Frontier Studies held in Durham, and his unique role in this field has been recognized through his election to a life Presidency by the Tenth Limeskongress at Xanten 1974.

Let us wish him many more years of creative writing:

iam senior, sed cruda viro viridisque senectus